



Bulletin No. 267

Supplement to the *Tasmanian Naturalist*

July 1992

The Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club is devoted to the study of all forms of Natural History, and is comprised of both experts and beginners. We cover a wide variety of topics, and we support conservation. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month, except January, in the Life Science Building at the University of Tasmania from 7.45 p.m. Outings are usually held the following weekend, meeting outside the main entrance to the Museum, Macquarie Street.

The Club's address is GPO Box 68A, Hobart, 7001 and the club contact is Don Hird (34 4293).

Programme

- Thurs. 6 Aug. 8p.m.: Special meeting featuring Michael Cusack, who will describe the year he shared with Susan Cusack in the wilderness at Kunmunya in the Kimberleys. This adventure was organised by Dick Smith and the *Australian Geographic* magazine. The Cusacks subsequently wrote a book about their adventure and have presented this 90-minute audio-visual many times on the mainland. The Club is bringing Michael Cusack from Melbourne for this special night. We have advertised this event as a public meeting. Tell your friends and relations as this should be a very special night. Please bring a plate of supper.
- Sat. 8 Aug 8:30a.m.: Outing to Bruny Island. We have two guest leaders on this trip. Dr Sally Bryant will take us up to McCrackens Gully, Barnes Bay where hopefully we will view some Forty-Spotted Pardalotes. Bring binoculars. Helen Walpole, who is a resident, may find us spots where the orchids are in bloom. We will be catching the 9:30am ferry from Kettering (\$17.00 per car) or meet at the Museum at 8:30am to arrange transport. A hot lunch has been arranged at Lydenne Restaurant, Barnes Bay for approximately \$10 per head. This is a further opportunity to meet Michael Cusack who is intending to come on this outing. Contact Phil Collier (29 6597) for details.
- Thurs. 3 Sept. 7:45p.m.: Parry Kostoglou of the Forestry Commission will describe the history of the southern forests.
- Sat. 5 Sept. 10a.m.: Parry will led this outing to the southern forests. Bring lunch and walking boots. Contact Patti Virtue (34 9478) for details.
- 18-20 Sept. w/e Meeting of the Federation of Field Naturalists Clubs of Tasmania at the large property Rushy Lagoon in the far north-east of Tasmania. On Saturday, the owner, Bert Farquhar, will lead an outing to various bush spots on the property. Saturday evening meal will be provided by the ladies of Gladstone, followed by spotlighting. On Sunday morning there will be a visit to the heathland at Tomahawk. Accommodation in comfortable shearers quarters. Contact Phil Collier (29 6597) for details.
- Thurs. 1 Oct. 7:45p.m.: Simon Fern is an avid Herpetologist. He will give us an overview of the three Tasmanian species of snakes and their habitats. He may be accompanied by several of his enormous hand reared examples!
- 3-4 Oct. w/e This will be a weekend trip to Lagoon Bay, east of Dunalley. Activities will include mammal trapping and bird, wildflower and beach observations. Simon will join us if the snakes are about. We will camp

out on Saturday night, however members are welcome to join us for a day. Leader Don Hird (34 4293).

Thurs. 5 Nov. 7.45p.m.: Peter Brown from Parks and Wildlife will talk to us about Swift Parrots.

Sat. 14 Nov. 10 a.m.: This outing coincides with the active breeding of the Swift Parrots. Our outing may be to Bruny Island, Fern Tree or more probably on a private property at Bream Creek south of Orford, near Hell Fire Bluff. The outing venue will be determined by the breeding activities of the Swift Parrot. Note this outing is a week later than usual.

New Members A special welcome to our new members Martin Stolp, Tony Conlan, Mark Fowler, Dr Liz Sikes and Katrina Swan, G & J Hilder and family and Beth Parsons.

The Tasmanian Naturalist New faces on the committee are providing energy in two directions. Club librarian, Sue Collier, is attempting to complete a bound collection of *The Tasmanian Naturalist* for the Club library. Naturalist Editor, Rob Taylor, is conducting a publicity drive to secure articles for current issues of *The Tasmanian Naturalist*.

The Club library is endowed with a motley collection of issues of *The Tasmanian Naturalist*. We still have duplicate copies of some really old issues and many tens of copies of some issues in the 1970's and 1980's. Esther Holt has donated to the library four bound volumes containing issues of *The Tasmanian Naturalist* from 1965 to 1987. The committee has agreed to bind the other issues in a similar style. This would then mean that members could easily find a copy of every issue. Unfortunately the library has no copies of several issues. Would any member have these issues? Our first preference is for donated original copies, but if this is not possible a loaned copy for photocopying would be most welcome. The issues we require are first series volume 2, numbers 1 (1908) and 2 (1909); second series volume 1, number 1 (1924); and third series volume 1, number 3 (1948) and volume 2, number 2 (1951/2).

Rob Taylor has written a letter requesting submissions for *The Tasmanian Naturalist*. This has been sent to allied clubs in Tasmania, many graduate students at the University of Tasmania, and other interested parties. In the letter Rob writes:

We would like to encourage people who have material suitable for *The Tasmanian Naturalist* to put pen to paper. The editor is willing to accept articles in an informal style from anyone with little experience in the writing of journal articles. Examples of suitable material are flora and fauna surveys, occurrence of rare species, outliers to the known distribution of a species, observations of unusual or unknown aspects of a species' natural history, overviews of contemporary issues and views on the management of natural values.

I'm sure that members of our own Club would have suitable material. Why not take up Rob's offer to assist writing up interesting material? Its not every Club which publishes a significant journal with such a long history. Be part of it!

Under the Blackwood Tree by Kelsey Aves Kelsey has produced his second audio cassette tape. This one is not simply a collection of bird calls. Included on this tape are bird calls in the background, some spoken words from Shakespearean, Wordsworth and others, and some music played on a virginal (a small harpsichord) made by Kelsey from Tasmanian timber. The tape is available at Club meetings for \$11.

Invitation from BOAT (Bird Observers' Association of Tasmania) A Hooded Plover Survey is being organised for October. The Hooded Plover is regarded as rare. This involves visiting various beaches, particularly up the east coast, and counting the breeding pairs of Hooded Plovers. This is a contribution to a national project. Please ring the Hooded Plover Survey Convenor, Priscilla Park, on (002) 476490 if you would like to help. A great chance to mix with some expert bird watchers.

Tasmanian Sea Shells Volume 2 by Margaret Richmond Club members are invited to the launch of this book at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery on Saturday 15 August at 5:30pm. The Director of the Museum, Ms Patricia Sabine, will launch the book.

Buy a Brick for Chauncy Vale The Brighton Council Chauncy Vale Management Committee has appealed for public help to build a cottage for a resident caretaker at Chauncy Vale. Donations may be sent to Greening Australia (Tas) Committee Inc., 169 Campbell Street, Hobart 7000. A signed statement should accompany donations requesting they be used for the Chauncy Vale Caretaker's Cottage Fund. Donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

Mammal Survey Group In 1991 Tas Field Naturalists commenced regular mammal survey activities, with monthly excursions supplementing regular club activities. We undertake capture-release surveys under permit and use spotlight and other observational techniques. Our current theme is the Mt Wellington Range. We usually conduct our overnight trapping on the weekend of the fortnight following the scheduled monthly club excursion. We welcome visitors and new mammal surveyors. Contact Don Hird for information ph 344293 (H), 215 912 (W).

Mammal Survey Group Program

- August 22-23 Neika pipeline track. Meet at the Neika Schoolhouse at 3:00pm Saturday, 9:00am Sunday.
- September 12-13 Lake Crescent area. Revisiting the sugar glider habitat from the April club outing. Overnight camping/hut. Details and map later.
- October 3-4 Lagoon Bay Club Camp, see page 1-2 for details.
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A report of the May Outing led by Angie Monks (written by Patti Virtue). It was a great day for fungi hunting on Mt Wellington. Fungi like the soaking rain as it stimulates the production of their fruiting bodies and softens the soil. We saw a fascinating variety and were fortunate to have another visiting expert with us who had just completed his PhD on on fungi in Victoria.

Of the Agarics (gill fungi) which are from the Family Agaricineae of the Basidiomycetes we saw various examples including *Galerina hypnorum* found amongst the moss, the slimy Honey fungus *Amillariella*, the inky cap and the shaggy cap.

The Boletes or tube fungi all have a very spongy underside which consist of a mass of vertical tubes in which the spores form. *Phaeogyroporus portentosus*, which stained blue after injury, amused the children who marred the specimen with graffiti. Another common mushroom found was *Phylloporus hyperion* which has gills rather than a tubular spore surface but has stronger microscopic affinities to the boletes rather than the a more obvious Agarics classification.

The most spectacular of the Clavarias family which include the coral fungi and the fairy clubs was the fairy castle (*Clavicornia pyxidata*) which has an amazing branching arrangement likened to medieval castles and towers. They have a hot pepper taste which makes identification easy for adventurous.

Of the Polypores which include the bracket fungi and the pore fungi we saw the rainbow bracket (*Coriolus versicolor*) and white punk (*Piptoporus portentosus*). The Gasteromycetes includes the puffball, earth stars and earth balls. We saw examples of all three forms including *Lycoperdon glabrescens* (the common puff ball) and *Geastrum triplex* the earth star.

After a meander up the Fern Glade track we found shelter in the Fern Tree Park to have lunch. As the day was deteriorating only the keen Hygrophorids continued along the pipeline track to Silver falls.

A report of the June Outing (written by Sue Collier). Swan Island lies in eastern Bass Strait about 3km offshore from Tree Point at the eastern end of Little Musselroe Bay. It is approximately 3km by 1km being one of the few islands in eastern Bass Strait with substantial native vegetation still remaining. The dominant vegetation is *Leptospermum laevigatum* which forms a dense cover in some parts. We were lucky to have some local knowledge in our party. Bob Patterson spent 6 months on the island 20 years ago as a lighthousekeeper.

Most of the party left from Hobart early on Friday morning for the long trip to Swan Island. The remaining four of us had to work on Friday and left Hobart after work staying overnight in Bridport. We set off in heavy rain and met Ron Harris at the isolated airstrip at Cape Portland for the 5 minute scenic flight in a 4 seater Cessna to Swan Island. By this time the weather had improved and we agreed that the flight was much too short! We had a short walk to the guest accommodation which houses around 10 people in luxury. This Federation style house was built in 1907 as a residence for the head lighthousekeeper.

After a very welcome morning tea the whole party set off for a walk around the island accompanied by Jill Harris. Our first stop was Elizas grave (the wife of a long serving lighthouse superintendent). There were a number of orchid leaves in evidence including *Pterostylis concinna* and *Caledonia latifolia*. Our walk took us to Telegraph Bay and West Beach where we observed a large flock of 70-80 ruddy turnstones (*Arenaria interpres*) feeding amongst the beach debris. We were shown the site of an aboriginal scraping tool which had been discovered recently by some archaeologists. It had been left in its original site. A pair of Cape Barren geese preparing to mate allowed us to get extremely close allowing the photographers to creep up on them on all fours.

Another interesting observation was the discovery of a female Blotched Blue-tongue Skink (*Tiliqua occipitalis*) by the side of a bush track. By her side was a fully formed, but apparently still-born young, inside the embryonic sac. This species produces approximately 8 live young. She appeared still quite fat and we suspected that she would give birth again later. Prior to this discovery there had been a sudden and quite hard hail shower. The birth may have occurred during this shower which may have contributed to the death.

The weekend was memorable for the many different types of fungi observed. These included the genera *Boletus*, *Lycoperdon* (puff balls), *Russula*, *Gaestrum* (earth star), *Laccaria* and probably many more. Some of the party were fortunate to find field mushrooms which were collected and fried (with lemon juice and cream) for breakfast the following day. Others of the group were not so keen to eat these delicacies (luckily the identification was correct and no-one fell ill).

The next couple of days of brilliant winter sunshine were spent walking around the very interesting coastline. At least 4 different species of starfish were found in a vast range of colours including pink, grey, blue and orange. The photographers had great fun with these using the rock pools as a backdrop.

Interesting items seen around the shore included a sea dragon, 3 different types of shark egg (Port Jackson, Ghost and one as yet unidentified).

Another highlight was being transported in Ron's trailer to observe the fairy penguins come up the beach to their burrows. It was a very cold but memorable evening watching the sun set and then the stars appear. We only spotted one penguin but were compensated by the unexpected sight of numerous glow worms amongst the *Tetragonia implexicoma* on which we were sitting.

The remains of two prions were found washed up on the beaches: a Fairy Prion (*Pachyptila turtur*) and Salvin's Prion (*Pachyptila salvini*).

A separate plant and bird list have been compiled as a record of our visit.